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USSR - MIDDLE EAST: MOSCOW WANTS SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS OF A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST AT AN EARLY STAGE OF THE FOUR-POWER TALKS.

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[REDACTED] SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO THE UN MALIK HAS SUGGESTED THAT THE FOUR POWERS PREPARE "GUIDELINES" FOR CARRYING OUT THE SECURITY COUNCIL'S NOVEMBER 1967 RESOLUTION. MALIK SAID THAT UN EMISSARY JARRING NEEDED GUIDANCE AT THIS POINT, AND THAT A GENERAL STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR HIS EFFORTS AS PRESCRIBED BY THE US WOULD BE INSUFFICIENT. JARRING TOLD AMBASSADOR YOST THAT HE FAVORS A FOUR-POWER STATEMENT URGING THE PROTAGONISTS TO "ACCEPT" THE RESOLUTION. IT APPEARS THAT THE SOVIETS, HOWEVER, WILL PRESS FOR A FOUR-POWER PLAN TO BE GIVEN TO THE ARABS AND ISRAELIS BY JARRING OR BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

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SOVIET AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN HAS TOLD SECRETARY ROGERS THAT MOSCOW AGREED WITH THE US SUGGESTION TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS OF THE MIDDLE EAST ON A BILATERAL BASIS AS WELL AS IN THE FOUR-POWER MEETINGS. HE SAID THAT THE USSR DID NOT INTEND TO REPLY FORMALLY TO THE US MEMORANDUM OF 15 JANUARY, BUT WAS PREPARED TO DISCUSS IT WHENEVER WASHINGTON WAS READY. THE SOVIETS HAVE REPEATEDLY TOLD THE ARABS THAT ONLY A SOVIET-US AGREEMENT COULD BREAK THE CURRENT DEADLOCK.

THE FRENCH AND BRITISH AMBASSADORS TO THE UN ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE FOUR POWERS MUST DO MORE THAN ISSUE A STATEMENT OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO JARRING. ALONG WITH THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR, THEY BELIEVE THAT THE FIRST FOUR-POWER MEETING SHOULD PREPARE SUBSTANTIVE GUIDANCE FOR JARRING. THIS IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE CONSIDERABLE CONSONANCE BETWEEN SOVIET AND FRENCH IDEAS ON HANDLING THE ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUE.

(continued)

THE SOVIETS HAVE ALWAYS TAKEN A MORE POSITIVE LINE WITH THE FRENCH THAN WITH OTHERS ON THE PROSPECTS FOR A SETTLEMENT. THEY RECENTLY TOLD A FRENCH OFFICIAL THEY WERE WILLING TO PRESS THE ARABS TO ACCEPT ALL ASPECTS OF A SETTLEMENT BEFORE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL BEGINS.

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